

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SCCT-01 DHA-02 IO-11 /067 W  
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P R 150958Z JAN 76 ZDK  
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7747  
INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA  
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 0533

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PROP

SUBJECT: RELEASE OF KAGNEW TWO: USG REPLY TO EPMG PRESS STATEMENT

REF: ADDIS ABABA 331, ADDIS ABABA 332, ADDIS ABABA 363

1. HERE FOLLOWS PROPOSED TEXT OF LETTER AMB WOULD SEND TO  
EPMG FONMIN KIFLE ON ABOVE SUBJECT. REQUEST DEPT'S APPROVAL  
OR COMMENT SOONEST.

BEGIN TEXT

DEAR MR. MINISTER:

I WRITE IN CONNECTION WITH YOUR GOVERNMENT'S  
PRESS RELEASE OF JANUARY 10 CONCERNING STATEMENTS IN THE  
U.S. PRESS. YOU WILL RECALL THAT I HAVE ALREADY MADE MY  
VIEWS KNOWN TO YOU ORALLY. THE FOLLOWING ARE THE VIEWS THAT  
MY GOVERNMENT HAS NOW ASKED ME TO CONVEY.

THERE ARE TWO AREAS OF CRITICISM OF THE US GOVT  
CONTAINED IN THAT RELEASE.

THE FIRST CONCERNS A STATEMENT MADE BY THE  
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE IN WASHINGTON CONFIRMING THAT TWO

AMERICANS WHO HAD BEEN KIDNAPPED IN ERITREA HAD BEEN RELEASED. THE PRESS RELEASE, USING INTEMPERATE LANGUAGE SUCH AS "SHAMELESSLY MISINTERPRETING" AND "DELIBERATE ATTEMPT AT A SMEAR CAMPAIGN", CRITICIZES THE STATE DEPARTMENT FOR ITS CONFIRMATION THAT THE TWO AMERICANS HAD BEEN RELEASED. IT ALSO ASSERTS THAT THERE IS A CONNECTION BETWEEN THAT STATE DEPARTMENT CONFIRMATION AND THE OAU CONFERENCE ON ANGOLA. MY GOVERNMENT OBJECTS BOTH TO THE LANGUAGE USED IN THE PRESS RELEASE AND TO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE ALLEGATION. THERE WAS NO CONNECTION WHATEVER BETWEEN THE OAU MEETING AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT STATEMENT. IN A DEMOCRACY SUCH AS OURS THERE IS NO WAY TO AVOID CONFIRMATION OF AN EVENT THAT HAD ALREADY COME TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PRESS. TO IMPLY OTHERWISE IS TO MISINTERPRET THE FACTS.

THE SECOND AREA OF CRITICISM INVOLVES A TIME MAGAZINE STORY THAT SAYS THAT THE U.S. GOVT HAD "PERSUADED ETHIOPIA TO HOLD OFF RECOGNITION" OF THE MPLA. MY GOVT KNOWS THAT THAT IS NOT AN ACCURATE STATEMENT, AND WE REGRET ITS PUBLICATION. WE HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF WHY TIME MAGAZINE PUBLISHED IT; IT IS OBVIOUSLY NOT IN THE INTEREST OF EITHER THE U.S. GOVT OR THE PROVISIONAL MILITARY GOVT OF SOCIALIST ETHIOPIA FOR SUCH A MISSTATEMENT TO APPEAR. YOUR GOVT WILL KNOW THAT MY GOVT DOES NOT EXERCISE CONTROL OVER THE PRIVATELY OPERATED MEDIA IN THE U.S., AND THAT WE CANNOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT THOSE MEDIA PUBLISH.

IF ASKED TO DO SO, WE COULD HAVE DENIED THE TRUTH OF THE TIME STATEMENT. HOWEVER, YOUR GOVT CHOSE NOT TO CONSULT WITH MY GOVT IN ANY WAY BEFORE PUBLISHING ITS PRESS RELEASE. WE HOPE THAT IN FUTURE THERE COULD BE SUCH CONSULTATION BEFORE SUCH STATEMENTS ARE ISSUED, AND THAT THE LANGUAGE OF FUTURE RELEASES COULD BE MORE IN CONFORMITY BOTH WITH ACCEPTED INTERNATIONAL PRACTICES, AND WITH THE FRIENDLY RELATIONS THAT WE HOPE EXIST BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

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SINCERELY,

ARTHUR W. HUMMEL   END TEXT

2. COMMENT: WE HAVE RESISTED TEMPTATION TO INSERT THOUGHT, WHICH IS A FACT, THAT NO ONE IN EPMG HAS YET EXPRESSED IN ANY WAY SATISFACTION THAT THE TWO KIDNAPPEES WERE RELEASED. LOCAL MEDIA, INCIDENTALLY, HAS PERSISTED IN REFERRING TO SUBSTANCE OF PRESS RELEASE EVEN AFTER

MY ORAL

PROTEST (ADDIS 331). BOTH AMHARIC AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE PAPERS JAN 13  
CARRIED CRITICAL EDITORIALS AND TELEVISION REHASHED STATEMENT  
EVENING JAN 12.  
HUMMEL

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** coburnhl  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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**Subject:** RELEASE OF KAGNEW TWO: USG REPLY TO EPMG PRESS STATEMENT  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PROP, (KIFLE WADOJO)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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